

**TOWN OF SALEM  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2015 – 7:00 P.M.  
SALEM TOWN OFFICE BUILDING**

**PRESENT**

TJ Butcher, Chairman  
Janet Griggs  
George Householder  
David Kennedy  
Hernan Salas, Alternate

**ABSENT**

Carole Eckart  
Robert Sartori  
John Dolan, Alternate  
Jenifer Lee, Alternate

**GUESTS**

Phil Teixeira

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Butcher called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**SEAT ALTERNATE IF NEEDED:**

**M/S/C: Householder/Griggs, to seat Alternate Board Member Salas for Full Board Member Eckart. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0, all in favor.**

**RECOGNITION OF VISITORS: *none***

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

Board Member Householder reported that an e-mail was received by the Firefighters requesting the attendance of Chairman Butcher and Board Members Griggs, Householder, and Kennedy for an upcoming presentation on the fire training building. Stating his concern regarding the attendance of the requested members, which would constitute a Board of Finance quorum, it was decided to create a subcommittee that would provide a report to the Board.

**M/S/C: Householder/Kennedy, to form a subcommittee for the Salem Fire Training Building Meeting on October 25, 2015 at noon. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.**

**M/S/C: Householder/Salas, to appoint Board Members Kennedy and Griggs to the subcommittee. Discussion: Chairman Butcher and Board Member Householder may attend as members of the public. An agenda will be posted. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.**

Board Member Householder also reported that the Board of Education (BOE) Meeting regarding the Salary Negotiations was cancelled and has not yet been re-scheduled. The BOE has until the beginning of the next school year to complete the negotiations.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:** *none*

**AGENDA:**

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: August 13, 2015 BOF Meeting**

**M/S/C: Griggs/Salas, to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of September 10, 2015, with the following amendments:**

item 4, third paragraph, addition:

*Board Member Householder requested and First Selectman Lyden agreed to have the Auditor review and approve the Tax Collector Policy.*

item 7 should be item 5

item 7, first paragraph, 3rd sentence:

The Board will be meeting with all of the other departments, *with the exception of the Board of Education*, at the next meeting.

**Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.**

**2. TREASURER'S REPORTS (See File Copy)**

- A. REVENUE SUMMARY**
- B. TRIAL BALANCE**
- C. FUND BALANCE**
- D. OTHER**

Treasurer Pam Henry reported that First Selectman Kevin Lyden, Finance Specialist Lisa Jablonksi, Tax Collector Cheryl Philopena, Cheryl Miller, CPA, and herself recently met with Auditor Marcia Marien to review the audit to date and everything appears to be running smoothly. The Auditor will also be coming in next month. Treasurer Henry was commended for her work and, she, in turn, commended all of the departments, all of whom work very well together.

The *Revenue Receipts, Budget v. Actual, Balance Sheet*, and *Capital Non-Recurring Fund* were reviewed, with no unusual occurrences. She will investigate the line items regarding the SBEA. The Unassigned Fund Balance as of the last audit is approximately \$2 million. A status report with an unofficial tally of the Unassigned Fund Balance, including any appropriations made to date, will be provided to the Board. She will also be forwarding a notice she recently received from the State regarding recent cuts that were made to Grants the Town was expecting to receive. Board Member Householder expressed his satisfaction with the revenue being received for licenses and permits, but is concerned with line item 5-126 Town Counsel and line items 5-220-621 Gardner Lake Fire Company Radio Repair and 5-222-622 Salem Volunteer Fire Company Radio Repair. An inquiry will be made to First Selectman Lyden regarding those three line items. Items noted with the letter "P" on the *Capital Non-Recurring Fund* Report

Board of Finance Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 8, 2015

indicates the numbers for the previous year. The starting year will be indicated following the “P” in subsequent reports as well as a note as to which items should be spent within three (3) years, rather than two (2) years.

The Board expressed their appreciation to and commended Treasurer Henry.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:** *none*

**4. SELECTMAN’S REPORT:** *not present*

**5. CAPITAL PLAN DISCUSSION**

Public Works, Recreation, Planning & Zoning, Zoning Board of Appeals, Selectman (Town’s Operating Budget), Other – *not present*

Board Member Griggs suggested requesting Finance Specialist Jablonski to send reminders. The departments may also come to the November or December meetings to discuss their Capital Plan.

**6. BOE EFFICIENCY STUDY**

Phil Teixeira provided a report on the Board of Education (BOE). With regards to questions that arose during his last report to the Board, he stated that the funding received from the leasing of the three (3) classrooms is going to the Town. He also reported that no schools were exempted from taking part in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC).

The Board reviewed and discussed the enrollment of students for the 2015-2016 school year and the Organizational Charts for the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, indicating a 0.45 FTE decrease. A question was raised regarding the ratio of students vs. teachers per grade, most notably the ratio of the Kindergarten teachers (3) and Grade 1 teachers (2), both of which have 39 students. It was explained that the Kindergarten teachers felt that, with the help of the Aides, they would be able to handle the number of students. Should they determine otherwise, they will notify the Superintendent. He will inquire regarding the Grade 3 students (44)-teachers (2) ratio.

The Board also reviewed Principal Joan Phillip’s analysis of the Smarter Balance Testing results. As stated last month, Salem School has fared well in comparison to other schools districts in the area, including East Lyme, and throughout the State. In the District Reference Group (DRG) C, Salem School ranks number one (1) in Math and number eight (8) in English out of 30 schools. In addition, in a recent presentation by the Principal of the High School, it was noted that East Lyme ranks 6<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> in their respective categories in the State.

A PowerPoint presentation provided by the Long Range Educational Planning Subcommittee Chairperson Dr. Mary Ann Pudimat to a Parents Group regarding the recent School Efficiency Study was reviewed. Many of the items in the Study have been addressed, while others will require further investigation. These include:

Board of Finance Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 8, 2015

- 1) **Changing the Grade Structure, i.e., sending the Town's 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to East Lyme Middle School** – Due to the disruption the change will cause, the Study will be posted on the school website with a link for residents to leave their comments/questions. Residents may also e-mail any comments/questions by clicking on the “Contact Us” button on the website. Dr. Pudimat and the Superintendent will review all comments/questions on a regular basis. The Board will be holding a number of presentations in an effort to provide the community with multiple opportunities to offer their input. The Subcommittee is hoping to present their final recommendations to the Board at their December meeting to help alleviate any anxiety the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers may have regarding the status of their employment. The advantages and disadvantages and a cost analysis of sending the Town's 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to East Lyme Middle School were reviewed.
- 2) **The sharing of services, including the Superintendent, Administration, Director of Special Services, Curriculum Director, and Technology, with the East Lyme School District** – While the sharing of the Superintendent and Administration is being placed on hold until a determination regarding the Grade Structure is made, soft discussions have been held with East Lyme regarding the remaining services. The possible requirement of each school district to have its own Superintendent will be investigated. The question of an East Lyme Superintendent and Administration running Salem School gaining the Town's approval was raised.
- 3) **The sharing of services with the Town** – The janitorial and maintenance services are currently being shared. The sharing of the Finance Director will require further investigation and a possible review by the Town Attorney and Auditor. TBNG Consulting, who is currently handling the school's technology services, is open to managing the Town's technology and are currently awaiting an invitation from the Town to conduct a survey of their equipment.
- 4) **Salem School** – The administration will maintain its stability and remain consistent from August 2014 to June 2016 and there have been no resignations and one job shift, at a teacher's request for personal reasons. Due to a change in the Teacher Retirement Board regulations for retired administrators, Mr. Michael Rafferty will no longer be able to serve as the School's Assistant Principal and a search for a new Assistant Principal has begun or will be beginning. Regularly scheduled meetings have been held with East Lyme to ensure that the School's curriculum coincides with theirs and a smooth transition is provided for the students. In addition, weekly curriculum meetings are held within the School to ensure that the students are meeting their timelines and targets. To this end, the standards for 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies/History are being redone to fulfill the State's new standards. Technology, the location of the District Offices, and the Administrative Support Staff, which may decrease in the future should the grade structure change, was reviewed. A series of four-week after-school extra-curricular activities, which is run by teachers and/or

Board of Finance Regular Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, October 8, 2015

volunteers and began last school year, is continuing. Should the program continue as such, future teachers' contract negotiations would need to be discussed. In addition, the Board will also need to investigate providing compensation for volunteers to obtain the necessary training and certification, as required by law. Expanded course offerings, including the after-school clubs, are also being offered.

- 5) **Communications** – The Community Relations Ad Hoc Committee Meetings and Principal's Parent Forums/Meetings are being held. In addition to the information provided on the website, the regularly distributed Wednesday Folders as well as the continuation of a transparent budget process, the Board is investigating the possibility of improving and widening the broadcasting of their meetings. To date, the microphones in the media room have been upgraded. Chairman Butcher suggested inviting Peter Sielman to one of their meetings to discuss the broadcasting of their meetings. The Salem/East Lyme Co-Operative Agreement has been posted on the website for several months and no comments have been received to date. The School Efficiency Study will also be posted and comments/questions will be reviewed on a regular basis.

A "scorecard" listing the recommendations in the Study and their respective progress was distributed and will be posted on the website.

The Board thanked Mr. Teixeira for his report and for embracing the Study.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**M/S/C - Butcher/Griggs, to adjourn the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor. Meeting Adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem